EXHIBIT 5

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Via Email: wendi.heinzelman@rochester.edu
Wendi Heinzelman
Professor and Dean
Edmund A. Hajim School of Engineering and Applied Sciences
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Dear Prof. Heinzelman,

I trust this email finds you well. I am writing in response to your email dated August 3, 2023, wherein you informed me of the decision to reassign my students to new advisors at the University of Rochester (U of R) to facilitate the completion of their degrees. I am compelled to express my reservations regarding this decision and its underlying rationale, while also providing additional context that I believe warrants careful consideration.

I acknowledge that, effective August 3, 2023, my students have been transitioned to new advisors, thereby concluding my longstanding engagement with them. This development prompts me to raise concerns about the basis for this decision, which appears to be predicated on complaints allegedly voiced by a few former and/or current students, known for their disruptive tendencies. It is noteworthy that I had previously brought up these disruptive behaviors to relevant parties at U of R and had sought support in addressing them. Unfortunately, the assistance I sought was not forthcoming, which has led us to the present scenario.

It is evident that the recent actions were taken without affording me the opportunity to comprehensively understand and respond to the specific complaints. Moreover, I have not been afforded any opportunity to present any information in support of my longstanding commitment to successfully teaching and mentoring hundreds of undergraduate and graduate students at the U of R over the last six years. This approach is concerning as it seems to overlook the principles of due process, a complete process, a thorough process and fair evaluation. The lack of a thorough investigation and a meaningful dialogue is particularly worrisome given the presence of established institutional policies, such as those in the Faculty Handbook, that emphasize the importance of a comprehensive and impartial process.

Amidst these developments, I must express my deep disappointment with the University's response and its perceived lack of support. Additionally, I am apprehensive about the potential lasting effects of this decision on my reputation and relationships with my students. The immediate

reassignment of my students has inadvertently conveyed a perception of wrongdoing on my part, which may negatively impact not only my standing but also the ongoing NSF/U of R investigation that my students were involved in. The hurried nature of this decision has the unintended consequence of creating a persistent bias and prejudice against me, which could have far-reaching implications. To some it may appear that this was a pre-determined and outcome driven result.

To provide a more complete picture, I wish to share specific insights into the two students whose complaints have led to these actions. Dylan Durkee, who joined my team in the summer of 2020, departed voluntarily in 2022 due to challenges that contributed to a disruptive work environment. He is a former student of Prof. Ashkan Salamat at UNLV. For the past several months, I have had a disagreement with Prof. Salamat and it would be very interesting to correlate the date of Dylan Durkee's complaint. Have you correlated the timing of those events to understand and assess any bias and/or prejudice that may be influencing Dylan Durkee?

Mr. Durkee's toxic attitude became more prevalent after his partner, a licensed real estate agent, was terminated by Unearthly Materials, Inc. As you know, I am affiliated with Unearthly Materials, Inc. and it became very noticeable that Mr. Durkee was very upset about his partner being terminated by a company with which I was affiliated. Mr. Durkee's negative attitude affected several students working in our lab such as Elliot Snider and Nathan Dasenbrock-Gammon as well as Ray McBride. Several students spoke to me about difficulties staying in the student office because of the toxic environment created by Mr. Durkee in the student office. His departure was a result of his incompatibility with the group's dynamics, a situation that affected the overall morale. As such, I did all I could to support Mr. Durkee's departure from the group with a recommendation that he join Prof. Suxing Hu's group.

Similarly, Ray McBride, closely associated with Durkee, experienced similar challenges, indicating a pattern that needs to be considered in the context of their complaints. I understand that Mr. McBride and Mr. Durkee socialize together, and I have no doubt that Mr. McBride's complaints are influenced by Mr. Durkee. Mr. McBride had many challenges with a very low undergraduate GPA and a demonstrable lack of research experience. I worked very hard to provide Mr. McBride with many opportunities to improve his standing in the lab. However, he allowed himself to be negatively influenced by Mr. Durkee and he too became a distraction to other students in the lab.

Despite the notable challenges, I attempted to support Mr. McBride and accepted him as a PhD student in 2019. Since then, I have had numerous individual meetings with Mr. McBride to discuss his tardiness in the lab, his lack of experimental note taking, his misunderstanding of basic experimental concepts and conditions and his confrontational and argumentative approach to other students working in the lab. Unfortunately, as a 5th Year PhD student, he was not able to make any meaningful progress in his PhD research. Despite my patience and understanding in working with Mr. McBride since 2019, I have little doubt that he will blame me for his lack of progress after five years. Have you considered Mr. McBride's prejudice and bias towards me when you reflexively moved all my students to new advisers?

I have previously met with Prof. John Lambropoulos and Prof. Steven Manly to discuss these issues. More recently, I expressed my concerns to Jill Morris. Have you spoken to any of these individuals before making the reflexive decision to move my students to new advisors? Had I been afforded the opportunity to address the specific complaints, I believe I could have provided

valuable insights that would have contributed to a more balanced evaluation taking into consideration the actual prejudice and bias of Mr. McBride and Mr. Durkee.

As an instructor to several hundred undergraduate students, as a mentor to 20-30 undergraduate students and 6 PhD students with 2 successfully graduating with their PhDs and 4 continuing, albeit having been moved to new advisors, I have always maintained a positive and supportive relationship with my students and mentees. My approach has been to not micromanage my PhD students but allow the creative freedom that they need to express their research. I have a consistent approach to monitoring the progress of my students and being available to assist them in a collaborative learning environment. Of note, which should not be lost on you or the U of R, over the past six years, I have hired approximately 21 undergraduate students with paid positions in my lab to perform undergraduate research. Most of those undergraduate students published various papers and many went on to attend prestigious graduate schools. Ultimately, many of those students successfully obtained highly compensated private sector jobs. This approach to mentoring undergraduate students was unique to my lab and has been very successful. Was this considered when you and the U of R made the reflexive decision to move all my students to new advisors?

Not only am I very disappointed in the decision to move all my students to new advisors without affording me any opportunity to respond to the alleged complaints, but I am also prepared to pursue the appropriate means to seek a review of this unfortunate decision. As such I am notifying you of my grievance that improper procedures have been implemented to move all my students to new advisors without affording me any opportunity to address the specific complaints which prompted the reflexive decision. It is also clear that the bias and prejudice of the complaining students has been permitted to enter the decision-making process to move all my students to new advisors. Finally, the reflexive decision to move all my students to new advisors with no process for me to respond to the alleged complaints and/or provide your and the U of R with any context for the complaints or to share my perspectives has in and of itself created a bias and prejudice within each of my students leading to an inappropriate presumption that I must have done something wrong to warrant my students being reassigned to new advisors.

Given the circumstances, I feel compelled to raise my concerns about the procedural deficiencies that have led to the reassignment of my students and the potential influence of implicit biases on these decisions. In pursuit of a fair and comprehensive resolution, I have included Department Chair Renato Perucchio in this correspondence and would like to request a meeting to further discuss these concerns. To provide additional context, I have attached copies of my Faculty Activity Reports for the years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, as well as my 3-Year Progress Report from December 5, 2019.

I am providing you with these documents in support of my concerns about the improper procedures that were used to make the decision to move all my students to new advisors as well as the inherent bias and prejudice that that has entered the process by which this decision was made. I note that after each FAR was submitted, I participated in comprehensive meetings to discuss my faculty activities, including teaching and mentoring activities. At no time during any FAR meeting was it ever brought to my attention that there were any complaints and/or concerns about my teaching and/or mentoring of undergraduate and/or graduate students at the U of R. To the contrary, I have express recollections of very specific positive and favorable discussions about my teaching and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students at the U of R. As such, the decision to move all my students to new advisors caught me totally off guard and is not supported

by the overwhelming evidence of favorable support for my teaching and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students over the past six years at the U of R.

With all due respect, but with no apologies for the forthright nature of this communication, I am shocked by the improper procedures that were used and the bias and prejudice that have invaded that improper process to make the decision to move all my students to new advisors. To my knowledge, this is an unprecedented action that is defied by my six years of documented successful teaching and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students at the U of R. I expect that you will accept this grievance communication in a professional manner and in the spirit of applying the appropriate procedures that will allow for a complete and thorough examination of the complaints including identifying bias and prejudices of the complaining parties as well as allowing me to defend against such complaints. Until then I urge you to allow my students to return to, and remain active in, my research group. These are concepts of fundamental fairness upon which the Faculty Handbook and the procedures set forth therein are in part founded.

I am committed to fostering a productive dialogue and upholding the principles of completeness, fairness, and unbiased assessment, as enshrined in the Faculty Handbook. I trust that we can work towards a just resolution of these concerns internally and without the need for external considerations.

Sincerely,

Ranga P. Dias

cc: Renato Perucchio (rlp@me.rochester.edu)
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